



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 6 February 2008

Current Nationwide



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- The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports that an employee of the Georgia Department of Transportation has confessed to falsifying dozens of bridge inspection reports since last fall, filing reports for bridges he did not inspect. The department will send other inspection crews to inspect the 54 bridges the employee confessed to lying about, as well as another 68 in Fulton County that raised officials' suspicions and 278 bridges in Gwinnett County that the employee's team had left on its list. (See item [14](#))
- According to the International Herald Tribune, four undersea communication cables have been cut in the past week, raising questions about the safety of the oceanic network that handles the bulk of the world's Internet and telephone traffic. No one knows what damaged the cables or whether the incidents were related. Communications in the Middle East have been hardest hit by the damage – though India, the U.S., and Europe also experienced slowdowns. (See item [26](#))

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical**: ELEVATED, **Cyber**: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *February 5, Exchange Morning Post* – (National) **President Bush requests \$25 billion for U.S. Department of Energy's FY 2009 budget.** The U.S. Secretary of Energy yesterday announced President Bush's \$25 billion Fiscal Year 2009 budget request for

the Department of Energy (DOE), an increase of \$1.073 billion over the FY 2008 appropriation. This request will continue investments to meet growing energy demand with clean, safe, affordable, reliable, and diverse supplies of energy; support the development of climate change technologies; advance environmental cleanup; and ensure the reliability of our nuclear weapons stockpile. The President's budget for DOE directly supports the development of cutting-edge carbon capture and storage technologies; begins to transform the weapons complex to address 21st century challenges; and accelerates technological breakthroughs to further the President's Advanced Energy Initiative and scientific leadership through the American Competitiveness Initiative.

Source:

<http://www.exchangemagazine.com/morningpost/2008/week6/Tuesday/020520.html>

2. *February 5, New York Times* – (National) **Utilities turn from coal to gas, raising risk of price increase.** With opposition to coal plants rising across the country – including a statement by three investment banks Monday saying they are wary of financing new ones – utility executives see plants fired by natural gas as the only kind that can be constructed quickly and can supply reliable power day and night. But North American supplies of natural gas will be flat or declining in coming years, according to the Energy Information Administration. Some experts fear a boom in gas demand for electricity generation will send natural gas prices even higher. Coal companies, while acknowledging some high-profile plant cancellations, say they expect continued growth in coal-fired generating capacity, albeit at a more moderate rate. Pace, a consulting firm, recently cut by a third its projection for new coal-fired generating capacity from now to 2025, while doubling its estimate of the amount of gas-fired capacity likely to be built. Environmental groups argue that utilities should focus on cutting demand for power, rather than build new capacity. Meanwhile, some utilities have decided to wait for a clear global-warming policy to emerge from Washington. Experts say electricity shortages are a distinct possibility in coming years.

Source:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/05/business/05gas.html?_r=1&ex=1359954000&en=e028e83fcaa9914d&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss&oref=slogin

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Chemical Industry Sector

3. *February 4, CBS 13 Sacramento* – (National) **New technology detects chemical attacks.** Intelligent Optical Systems is working on a project called “Di-Cast,” which is designed to detect chemicals that may be used by terrorists in an attack on the U.S. “The whole length of the cable is the chemical sensor, so within the cable, we have optical fibers which are designed to respond to the presence of cyanide, which is a major threat from terrorists, chlorine gas, nerve gas, and even hydrogen sulfide,” said a developer. “With our system, we have a box, but hooked up to the box are cables which can snake out in any directions, in multiple directions, and as soon as the chemical target reaches the cable, bingo, you get an alarm, and you can warn people much sooner,” he said. “We’d originally thought the military was going to be our primary customer, but 9/11

changed all that,” he said. “It’s now really much more important for us, and we’ve focused our development efforts directly on counter-terrorism applications.” Several million dollars have been spent developing “Di-Cast” over the last five years, and they hope to release the product later this year. Right now it is being tested out in the subway system of a major city, but the official could not reveal which city that is.

Source: <http://cbs13.com/local/ditech.chemical.cords.2.645983.html>

4. *February 4, WJBF 6 Augusta* – (Georgia) **South Augusta chemical leak causes road closure.** A chemical leak from a rail car forced a road to close in south Augusta, Georgia, Monday morning. The chemical was identified as sulfur trioxide, a raw material used in making other chemicals at Solvay Advanced Polymers, where the rail car was headed. The leak was discovered by rail workers, who said they noticed a “wisp of vapors” coming from one of the rail cars. Emergency workers said they have the spill contained. A Solvay representative said the chemical is hazardous. There were no injuries, and the community is in no danger. No word on when the roads will be opened again.
Source: http://www.wjbf.com/midatlantic/jbf/news_index.apx.-content-articles-JBF-2008-02-04-0006.html
5. *February 4, Telegraph Herald* – (Illinois) **Chemical spill reported in Stockton.** A chemical spill at Dura Automotive in Stockton, Illinois, Monday morning sent 200 workers home, but no one was injured. The spill was reported around 7:46 a.m. Monday, according to the Stockton Fire Department. The plant was immediately evacuated, and the Jo Daviess County Hazmat Team responded. A spokesperson for Dura said a leaky valve spewed out about 50 gallons of a chemical used in the paint process. Fire officials said no one was injured in the spill, and the people in surrounding neighborhoods were not at risk.
Source: <http://www.thonline.com/article.cfm?id=189616>
6. *February 4, WTVQ 36 Lexington* – (Kentucky; Colorado) **Funding increased for Blue Grass Army Depot chemical weapons disposal project.** The project to dispose of deadly chemical weapons at the Blue Grass Army Depot in Richmond, Kentucky, is getting an increase in funding from the Department of Defense (DOD). The DOD has increased the budget by nearly \$50 million to dispose of chemical weapons in Kentucky and Colorado. Kentucky is expected to see about half of that money, which according to the watchdog organization, Chemical Weapons Working Group, is the first time the program has been fully funded to the levels necessary to execute projects. Last year, a deadline to complete the project by 2017 at the Blue Grass Army Depot was mandated by law.
Source: <http://www.wtvq.com/midatlantic/tvq/news.apx.-content-articles-TVQ-2008-02-04-0013.html>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

7. *February 4, Daily News Journal* – (National; International) **Congressman questions**

plan to import nuclear waste into U.S. A U.S. congressman is asking the Northwest Interstate Compact for Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management to withhold support for a license application filed by the Utah-based company EnergySolutions to import 20,000 tons of low-level radioactive waste from Italy, process it in Tennessee, and dispose of the waste in Utah. The Compact is comprised of eight states: Wyoming, Montana, Washington, Utah, Oregon, Idaho, Hawaii, and Alaska. EnergySolutions disposes of more than 90 percent of the low-level radioactive waste generated in the U.S. through a license granted by the State of Utah and with the permission of the Compact. The license application marks the first time in the history of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission that a company has asked to dispose of large amounts of foreign-generated waste in the U.S. EnergySolutions has made clear its intent to pursue decommissioning work in both the U.S. and Europe. "It is highly likely that this is the first application with a string to follow," the congressman said.

Source:

<http://dnj.midsouthnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080204/NEWS01/80204034>

8. *February 4, Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter* – (Wisconsin) **Point Beach plant's Unit 1 back on.** Point Beach Nuclear Plant in Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, began bringing its Unit 1 online Monday. The 514-megawatt unit lost off-site power on January 15 and was shut down. The plant's owner, FPL Group, declared an unusual event as a result of the power loss. An unusual event is the lowest of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's four emergency classifications and is for minor problems that do not affect public health or safety.

Source:

<http://www.htrnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080204/MAN0101/80204218/1984>

9. *February 4, Reliable Plant* – (International) **U.S. and Russia sign nuclear energy agreement.** On Friday, the U.S. Commerce Secretary and the director of Russia's Federal Atomic Energy Agency signed a long-term suspension agreement governing trade in nuclear fuel. The agreement will provide U.S. utilities with a reliable supply of nuclear fuel by allowing Russia to export to the U.S., while minimizing any disruption in the development and completion of new enrichment facilities in the U.S. The agreement allows for sales of Russian uranium products directly to U.S. utility companies under a quota for Russian exports between 2014 and 2020. Russia will also be able to export smaller quantities of uranium products during the years 2011 through 2013. Prior to today's agreement, Russia was unable to sell enriched uranium products to U.S. utilities.

Source:

<http://www.reliableplant.com/article.asp?pagetitle=U.S.%20and%20Russia%20sign%20nuclear%20energy%20agreement&articleid=10351>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

10. *February 4, Associated Press* – (National) **New medical device chip uses less power.**

Texas Instruments Inc. engineers and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) researchers say they have designed a new chip that consumes less power and can be used on acoustic sensors in the battlefield that detect tanks and on health monitors for soldiers. The design would allow chips to run on 0.3 volts instead of the 1-volt level of most current chips. The U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency gave MIT about \$700,000 over the past two years to conduct the research, and more will be awarded soon, said an Army technology executive. He said power consumption is a key issue with battlefield sensor networks and the MIT work offers “significant potential” to operate more sophisticated systems or run them longer. “The future Army is very robotic,” he said. “The soldier controls what goes on, but [with sensors] he doesn’t have to put himself in harm’s way. It saves lives.” If semiconductor companies can overcome production obstacles, such a chip could be ready for commercial use in five years, said an MIT researcher.

Source:

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5jrwFgMusxwK7bUcneTrocNMS7REwD8UJOUA81>

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Banking and Finance Sector

11. *February 4, Associated Press* – (Illinois) **Feds nab woman accused of ID thefts.** A woman suspected of stealing other people’s identities and duping some of the country’s top universities into admitting her and giving her student loans has been arrested in a Chicago suburb, federal investigators say. The woman, who had been one of the Secret Service’s most wanted fugitives, was indicted in September by a federal grand jury on charges of mail fraud, wire fraud, false identification documents, and aggravated identity theft.

Source: <http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5hKgBtxUPr-HQNXogsmcgJN4XjC2AD8UJIS780>

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Transportation Sector

12. *February 5, Clarion-Ledger* – (National) **Thompson pushing TSA for answers concerning armed officers on flights.** A member of the U.S. House of Representatives has given the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) two weeks to report to his committee what the agency is doing to make sure air passengers claiming to be police officers are positively identified before they are allowed to bring their guns aboard. In a February 1 letter to the TSA Assistant Secretary, the congressman asked for a progress report on the creation of a high-tech verification process for passengers seeking to fly armed, including a timeline for completion of the system. The congressionally-established deadline is less than a year away. Under federal rules, passengers must present to an airline representative a photo ID identifying themselves as a law enforcement officer and a letter from their agency before they are allowed to pass through security with their weapon. But the regulations do not require anyone to

independently verify the passenger actually is a police officer. An August 2007 report issued by the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General found TSA workers in Jackson, Mississippi, kept incomplete logs of who was allowed to bring guns aboard flights and advised TSA to more carefully review their procedures. In 2000, congressional investigators reported they were able to breach airport security using phony police IDs. In 2004, Congress ordered TSA to develop a “biometric” verification process that uses fingerprints or retinal scans to verify the identity of armed passengers claiming to be law enforcement officers, but that system still has not been completed.

Source:

<http://www.clarionledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080205/NEWS/802050384/1001/news>

13. *February 4, Associated Press* – (Missouri) **Smoke in cabin prompts emergency landing.** A United flight made an emergency landing in Kansas City, Missouri, on Monday after smoke was reported in the cabin area. The flight, which was headed from Washington, DC, to San Francisco, landed safely at about 10:20 a.m., said a spokesman for Kansas City International Airport. No injuries were reported. Maintenance crews were inspecting the aircraft, a Boeing 767, to determine the cause of the smoke, said a United spokeswoman.
Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22994434/>
14. *February 4, Atlanta Journal-Constitution* – (Georgia) **DOT employee falsified bridge inspection reports.** An employee of the Georgia Department of Transportation has confessed to falsifying dozens of bridge inspection reports since last fall, filing reports for bridges he did not inspect, said a DOT commissioner. The malfeasance may have started just three months after a bridge collapsed in Minneapolis last August, killing 13. The previous round of inspections would have been done by the same team because DOT keeps the teams assigned to the same bridges over time. The two-man inspection team apparently fell behind in their inspections at the end of last year, with a deadline approaching to submit inspection data to the federal government this spring. In one case, they claimed to have inspected 18 bridges in one day. In addition, one team member took a great deal of time off, said the DOT commissioner. She said the department will send other inspection crews to inspect the 54 bridges the team leader confessed to lying about, as well as another 68 in Fulton County that raised officials’ suspicions and 278 bridges in Gwinnett County that the team had left on its list. The team had jurisdiction over more than 1,300 bridges in Rockdale, north Fulton, Gwinnett, and part of DeKalb counties.
Source: <http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/stories/2008/02/04/DOT0204.html>
15. *February 2, Dallas Morning News and WFAA 8 Dallas* – (Texas) **Railroad tampering suspected in Garland train derailment.** Local authorities are warning officers to be on the lookout after a minor train derailment in Garland, Texas, was believed to have been caused by someone tampering with the track. The October incident on a Kansas City Southern line is being investigated by the federal joint terrorism task force. The Garland derailment happened about the same time as two other incidents of railroad tampering in Chicago and Los Angeles that could have caused a derailment, according to a

confidential law enforcement bulletin. In the Garland incident, somebody laid railroad spikes against a switch in an apparent effort to cause a derailment, authorities said. The Chicago incident occurred in September when someone removed rail spikes from ties on one side of the track on the approach to an overpass above a highway. The following month, someone removed clips used to secure cross ties from a curved section of elevated track on a commuter rail line north of downtown Los Angeles. In the Los Angeles and Chicago incidents, the clips and spikes that had been removed were found in the area, the bulletin said. The bulletin said that authorities had not found any evidence of terrorist links to the two incidents.

Source: http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/city/garland/stories/DN-derailed_02met.ART.North.Edition1.4519eb0.html

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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Agriculture and Food Sector

16. *February 5, California Farmer* – (National) **USDA proposed budget released.** The budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for fiscal year 2009 was announced Monday at around \$95 billion, a slight increase from the \$92 billion for this year. The Agriculture Secretary says some tough choices had to be made in arriving at this budget, and there will be more changes ahead as there is a proposal to shift discretionary funds to mandatory programs. The American Farm Bureau says they are concerned about some of the shifts and proposals that were offered in the budget, especially cuts in commodity programs and conservation and research grants. The \$62.2 billion for food stamps, nutrition, and other feeding programs makes up 63 percent of the USDA budget, and there will be a \$3 billion contingency fund should the actual cost of the food stamp program exceed estimated levels. Farm subsidies under the current proposal would make up 15 percent of the budget, with conservation receiving 11 percent, research six percent, rural development three percent, and international programs two percent.

Source: <http://californiafarmer.com/index.aspx?ascxid=fpStory&fpsid=32064&fpstid=1>

17. *February 5, KSFY 13 Sioux Falls* – (South Dakota) **USDA reacts to suspect beef.** Meat from “downer cows” slaughtered at a plant in Chino, California has been taken off the shelves and put on hold in schools across South Dakota. Those schools are waiting to hear from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding hundreds of pounds of this questionable beef. The USDA, which says it will be over week before schools have a final decision, is trying to determine if alleged “downer cows” went into the food supply in addition to looking into potential violations of food safety and humane handling regulations. As part of USDA operating procedures, they are given ten days to investigate the situation. After that, they will have to give schools a final decision.

Source: <http://www.ksfy.com/news/15295641.html>

18. *February 5, Associated Press* – (National) **USDA says all 50 states free of cattle disease.** Brucellosis, a serious and contagious livestock disease that can sicken cattle and cause them to abort their calves, is nearly eradicated in all 50 states, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). While the disease can spread from animals to humans, its main threat is to cattle, bison, and swine – causing decreased milk production, infertility, lameness, and loss of young. There is no known treatment for the disease. The USDA announced that Texas was the last state to become “brucellosis free” last week, saying it is the first time in 74 years that all states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have reached that status for commercial herds. Still, the disease could pose threats in the West, where the presence of brucellosis in free-ranging bison and elk in Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park could affect herds in surrounding states. If brucellosis is found in more than one herd of cattle in a brucellosis-free state within two years, the state loses its brucellosis-free status and may face restrictions on interstate cattle movement. Montana discovered the disease in a herd last May.

Source:

http://www.tulsaworld.com/business/article.aspx?articleID=20080205_5_E2_spanc82558

19. *February 5, eFluxMedia* – (National) **Olivier dip recalled over botulism concerns.** 11.76-ounce jars of Olivier brand Parmesan & Asiago Dip with Garlic & Basil, manufactured by the Olivier Olive Oil Products company of St. Helena, California, are being recalled for possible *Clostridium botulinum* contamination. *Clostridium botulinum* is a bacterium that causes botulism, a potentially fatal form of food poisoning. The jars were sold nationally at Williams-Sonoma stores and at two Olivier Napa Valley retail stores in California. The recalled jars are labeled with one of the following lot numbers: OPA 34171, OPA 23471, OAP 17271, OAP 17671, OAP 36061, OAP 36161, or OPA 33961. According to public health officials, lot numbers are printed on the side of the glass jar where there is no label. Health officials said that no one had presented symptoms of botulism so far. However, people experiencing any symptoms of the disease should immediately seek medical attention. The period of incubation can be from two hours to two weeks.

Source:

http://www.efluxmedia.com/news_Olivier_Dip_Recalled_over_Botulism_Concerns_13606.html

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Water Sector

Nothing to report.

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

20. *February 5, Xinhua* – (International) **Over 30 districts affected by bird flu in Bangladesh.** The number of bird flu-affected districts in Bangladesh has risen to 37 out of a total 64 districts until Tuesday morning, as bird flu continued to take its toll of the flourishing economic sector. In the last 24 hours until Tuesday morning, a total of 25,705 chickens, ducks, and pigeons were culled, while 6,042 others died of bird flu in three Bangladesh districts: eastern Narsingdi, western Kushtia, and western Jhenidah. With the latest culling, a total of 449,593 birds have so far been destroyed, and 68,420 died of avian flu in 58 sub-districts of 37 districts since March 2007, bird flu control room sources said Tuesday. The H5N1 bird flu virus was also found after carrying out tests on crows in some areas of the country, including the city Chittagong. But the test on crows that died in the capital city Dhaka has not been confirmed yet, according to local media reports. The situation has been getting worse since last month, as the bird flu virus is spreading quickly across the country. So far, there have been no human infections.
Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-02/05/content_7574501.htm
21. *February 5, Reuters* – (International) **India says bird flu outbreak in east contained.** India's worst outbreak of bird flu appears to be under control, with a massive cull of poultry to contain the disease almost completed, health officials said on Tuesday. More than 3.4 million birds have been culled in West Bengal, where 13 of the 19 districts have been affected by the H5N1 bird flu virus since the disease was first reported last month, state officials said. Disinfecting villages affected by avian influenza could continue for several weeks, the state's animal resources minister said. India said tests of at least 23 people – including several veterinary staff who were held in isolation wards with symptoms of influenza – had turned out negative for H5N1.
Source: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/scienceNews/idUKSP16270020080205?sp=true>

Government Facilities Sector

Nothing to report.

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Emergency Services Sector

22. *February 5, Network World* – (National) **FBI warns emergency 911 swatters are a growing menace.** The FBI today said there has been a significant increase in the illegal activity known as “swatting,” where criminals and pranksters call in a fake 911 in hopes of drawing a response from law enforcement – usually a Special Weapons and Tactics team. The U.S. Department of Justice says swatters also make other false reports to elicit an emergency response by other first responders, such as adult protective services, to a specific physical address. In addition, swatters typically spoof phone numbers to conceal their identity. Swatters often tell tales of hostages about to be executed or bombs about to detonate. The community is placed in danger as responders rush to the scene, taking them away from real emergencies. And the officers are placed in danger as unsuspecting

residents may try to defend themselves, the FBI said in a statement. The FBI said it has arrested five swatters who, between 2002 and 2006, called 911 in more than 60 cities nationwide, impacting more than 100 victims, causing a disruption of services for telecommunications providers and emergency responders, and resulting in up to \$250,000 in losses. Swats that the group committed included using bomb threats at sporting events, causing the events to be delayed; claiming that hotel visitors were armed and dangerous, causing an evacuation of the entire hotel; and making threats against public parks and officials, the FBI stated.

Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/community/node/24714>

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Information Technology

23. *February 5, InformationWeek* – (National) **Google debuts e-mail security services for business.** Google plans to announce today new e-mail security, encryption, and archiving services for corporate e-mail users. Google's new security and compliance offerings – Google Message Filtering, Google Message Security, and Google Message Discovery – will be made available to users of Google Apps and to users of other e-mail systems, including Lotus Notes, Microsoft Exchange, and Novell's Groupwise. Google Message Filtering provides spam and malware filtering. Google Message Security combines Google Message Filtering with enhanced virus detection, outbound processing to prevent data leaks, and content policy management. Google Message Discovery includes the Filtering and Security services, plus one year of searchable message archiving. With so much spam and malware polluting the Internet, the founder of Excel Micro, a distributor of Google Apps Security and Compliance Products, says that small businesses just cannot manage their own e-mail infrastructure effectively. "We're seeing a large number of clients come to the software-as-a-service model because the spam traffic is too great to do it yourself," he said.

Source:

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=206103970>

24. *February 4, Dark Reading* – (International) **MayDay! Sneakier, more powerful botnet on the loose.** A new peer-to-peer (P2P) botnet even more powerful and stealthy than the infamous Storm has begun infiltrating mostly U.S.-based large enterprises, educational institutions, and customers of major Internet service providers. The MayDay botnet can evade leading antivirus products, and so far has compromised thousands of hosts, according to Damballa, which says 96.5 percent of the infected machines are in the U.S. and about 2.5 percent in Canada. Damballa first hinted of this potential successor to Storm late last year. MayDay uses a combination of techniques to communicate with its bots, including hijacking browser proxy settings, says the vice president of engineering for Damballa. He says, "It can communicate through an enterprise's secure Web proxy and conduct updates and attack activities" – a unique method for a botnet. The Web proxy approach also demonstrates that this is no random bot infection: "Designing bot malware to specifically use Web proxies is a clear indicator that it's targeting [specific] enterprise systems," he says. The botnet uses two forms of P2P communications to ensure it can talk to its bots, including the Internet Control Message Protocol. "This

malware is for multiple protocols and is specifically designed to be successful despite whatever security controls might be” in place, he says. The infection comes in the form of what appears to the victim to be an Adobe Reader executable, but is actually the malware.

Source: http://www.darkreading.com/document.asp?doc_id=144919

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: www.us-cert.gov.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

25. *February 5, PC Magazine.com* – (National) **FCC: Mobile phone service nears 99 percent.** Almost 99 percent of the U.S. population has access to at least one or more mobile phone provider, and 80 percent of Americans now subscribe to wireless service, according to a Monday report from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Looking at census information and maps from American Roamer, which produces details maps of network coverage boundaries, the FCC found that 280 million Americans, or 99.8 percent, have one or more options when it comes to choosing a cell phone provider. Last week, a similar report by the Department of Commerce found that U.S. broadband penetration also achieved the 99 percent mark, although some critics labeled it as self-serving. According to the FCC, more than 95 percent of Americans have at least three wireless options, while half of the U.S. population has at least five competing wireless providers in their area, the report said. Of those in rural areas, 99.3 percent have access to one or more provider. Between 2005 and 2006, wireless subscribers jumped from 213 million to 242 million. Approximately 80 percent of all Americans now subscribe to cell phone service, according to the report.

Source: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2256207,00.asp>

26. *February 4, International Herald Tribune* – (International) **Ruptures call safety of Internet cables into question.** Four undersea communication cables have been cut in the past week, raising questions about the safety of the oceanic network that handles the bulk of the world’s Internet and telephone traffic. Most telecommunications experts and cable operators say that sabotage seems unlikely, but no one knows what damaged the cables or whether the incidents were related. One theory – that a wayward ship traveling off course because of bad weather was responsible for cutting the first two cables last week – was dismissed by the Egyptian government over the weekend. No ships passed the area in the Mediterranean where the cables were located, the country’s Ministry of Communications said Sunday. “This has been an eye-opener for us, and everyone in the telecom industry worldwide,” said the secretary of the Internet Service Providers Association of India. Today, the cause of the problem may have been an anchor, “but

what if it is sabotage tomorrow?” he asked. “These are owned by private operators, and there are no governments or armies protecting these cables,” he added. Communications in the Middle East have been hardest hit by the damage – though India, the U.S., and Europe also experienced slowdowns. Telecommunications operators have been trying to diversify the routes they can use for transmissions in recent years, said the research director at TeleGeography Research, particularly since an earthquake in Taiwan in 2006 disrupted service in Asia. The cable network contains “choke points” – like those off the coast of Egypt and Singapore where many cables run – and operators need to make sure their transmission routes are diversified, he said. Undersea cables carry about 95 percent of the world’s telephone and Internet traffic, according to the International Cable Protection Committee, an 86-member group that works with fishing, mining, and drilling companies to curb damage to submarine cables.

Source: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/02/04/technology/cables.php>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

27. *February 5, Grand Junction Sentinel* – (Colorado) **Bomb threat empties Delta Wal-Mart.** The Wal-Mart in Delta, Colorado, was evacuated Monday after a bomb threat was called in, the second time in four days that a Wal-Mart store in the area was threatened. The Grand Junction Wal-Mart was evacuated after a bomb threat Friday. The Delta Interim Police Chief said “an irate individual” called the bomb threat in to an employee around 3:30 p.m. and stated, “I hope you find the bomb.” He said there is probably no connection to the threat to the Grand Junction store. About 75 employees and 200 customers were evacuated from the store after the threat came in and police and the Delta Fire Department searched the building. All entrances to the building were blocked off while the search was being conducted, and the store reopened around 5:30 p.m.

Source:

http://www.gjsentinel.com/hp/content/news/stories/2008/02/05/020508_3a_delta_threat.html

28. *February 5, KIFI 8 Idaho Falls* – (Idaho) **Suspicious device found at Idaho Falls Red Lion.** Idaho Falls police are investigating a suspicious package found in the stairwell of the Red Lion Hotel Saturday night. An employee of the hotel discovered the small device, described as a package wrapped in electrical tape with a fuse coming out of it. Police say it looked as if someone had lit the fuse. According to police, black gunpowder was leaking from the package. A member of the Idaho Falls Regional Bomb Squad responded. Two suspects were seen leaving the hotel about an hour before the device was discovered; they are described as having long black hair and trench coats.

Source: http://www.localnews8.com/Global/story.asp?S=7822193&nav=menu554_2

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

Nothing to report.

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Dams Sector

29. *February 5, WLFI 18 Lafayette* – (Indiana) **Evacuation near Oakdale Dam.** Carroll County, Indiana, emergency responders are evacuating an area near the Oakdale Dam because of flooding. The incoming water from Lakes Freeman and Shafer are causing an increase in the dam's flow. The Oakdale Dam flow is nearing 14-thousand cubic feet per second. The National Weather Service expects extensive flooding for Carroll, White, and Tippecanoe counties.

Source: http://www.wlfi.com/Global/story.asp?S=7823532&nav=menu591_3

30. *February 5, Intelligencer* – (Pennsylvania) **Levee break leaves canal drier.** A section of the Delaware Canal near New Hope, Pennsylvania, collapsed over the weekend, causing the canal's 23-mile southern stretch to lose water. A 40-foot-wide and 20-foot-deep gash was caused when the towpath collapsed into the Delaware River on Friday night, said the manager of Delaware Canal State Park. He said the piece that broke had been flagged as damaged by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, but that officials believed it would hold up while rehabilitation efforts focused on more heavily hit parts of the canal. The collapse comes as a \$30 million to \$35 million project begins to repair the 60-mile historic attraction, which was once a transportation hub for bringing goods to and from Philadelphia by barge. It is unknown what caused the rupture Friday, though heavy rains may have contributed.

Source: <http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/113-02042008-1482594.html>

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